Eliminating any Morse code testing requirement for access to the HF bands will essentially gut Amateur Radio, quickly paving the way for it to become the mess that Citizens Band radio is today. Without code testing, all that stands in the way of access to the HF bands will be studying the public answers to written tests. This will attract the lowest common denominator of operators, operators who have no discipline or sense of achievement or sense of history of what Amateur Radio really is. Therefore, they will give scant attention to rules, courtesy, Elmering, and furtherance of the technical aspects of the hobby. Unable to even have the fortitude to learn 5 WPM, what can we expect of their respect for this hobby that is prized by thousands upon thousands of hams. The FCC needs to make a stand to retain standards of quality from those who wish the privilege of HF operation. There are many ways to accomplish this, but one cornerstone has always been Morse code. Many a code-capable ham today had an initial aversion to Morse code, but once exposed grew quickly to love it and even use it as their primary mode of operation. Others leave it behind, but their exposure to it helps them understand others preference for it and it requires little effort to surmount the hurdle of learning it, especially at the current level required. I urge the FCC to reject calls for the code's demise or at worst declare a moratorium on further changes for a number of years. Thank you for your attention to my comments.

Sincerely,

Casey Bahr, KS7J